

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Daniel Henry Marti, of Virginia, to be Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator, Executive Office of the President?

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 92, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 69 Ex.]

YEAS—92

Alexander	Fischer	Murray
Ayotte	Flake	Nelson
Baldwin	Franken	Paul
Barrasso	Gardner	Perdue
Bennet	Gillibrand	Peters
Blumenthal	Grassley	Portman
Blunt	Hatch	Reed
Booker	Heitkamp	Reid
Boozman	Heller	Risch
Boxer	Hirono	Roberts
Brown	Hoeven	Rounds
Burr	Inhofe	Sanders
Cantwell	Isakson	Sasse
Capito	Johnson	Schatz
Cardin	Kaine	Schumer
Carper	King	Scott
Casey	Kirk	Sessions
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Shelby
Cochran	Lankford	Stabenow
Collins	Leahy	Sullivan
Coons	Lee	Tester
Corker	Manchin	Thune
Cornyn	Markey	Tillis
Cotton	McCain	Udall
Crapo	McCaskill	Vitter
Daines	McConnell	Warner
Donnelly	Menendez	Warren
Durbin	Merkley	Whitehouse
Enzi	Mikulski	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	Wyden
Feinstein	Murphy	

NOT VOTING—8

Coats	Heinrich	Shaheen
Cruz	Murkowski	Toomey
Graham	Rubio	

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON LEE NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Michelle K. Lee, of California, to be Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON HALL NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Jeffery S. Hall, of Kentucky, to be a Member of the Farm Credit Administration Board, Farm Credit Administration, for a term expiring October 13, 2018?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON TONSAGER NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Dallas P. Tonsager, of South Dakota, to be a Member of the Farm Credit Administration Board, Farm Credit Administration, for a term expiring May 21, 2020?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislation session.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SELMA MARCHES

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I rise today on the 50th anniversary of the Selma marches and to call on Congress to come together to protect all Americans' sacred right to vote.

In March of 1965, thousands of Americans came together in Alabama to march the 54-mile highway from Selma to the State capital of Montgomery. They marched in defiance of the segregationist repression in the Jim Crow South. They marched to demand that Black American citizens be allowed to exercise their constitutional right to vote.

On March 7, 1965, 50 years ago this week, some 600 civil rights marchers headed east of Selma on U.S. Route 80. That day, March 7, would go down in history as Bloody Sunday. They got as far as the Edmund Pettus Bridge, 6 blocks away, where State and local law enforcement attacked them with billy clubs and tear gas and drove them back into Selma.

This photo reflects the scene on the bridge where JOHN LEWIS and others were being struck down with batons. Images of peaceful marchers brutally attacked by uniformed State troopers were broadcast worldwide. Seeing how

peaceful activists who sought to ensure the franchise were treated by the very law enforcement officers sworn to uphold the law in Selma shocked the conscience of Americans everywhere and began an awakening that would ultimately lead to the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

Two days later, on March 9, Martin Luther King, Jr., led a symbolic march to the same bridge where they were confronted by State troopers. Still awaiting requested Federal protection, and seeking to minimize the risk of additional violence, Dr. King turned the marchers around and led them back to the church where they had started.

Dr. King knew the threat of Jim Crow had to be stopped by the law, so he sought Federal court protection for a third full-scale march from Selma to the State capital in Montgomery. Ruling in favor of the demonstrators, Federal District Court Judge Frank M. Johnson, Jr., wrote:

The law is clear that the right to petition one's government for the redress of grievances may be exercised in large groups . . . and these rights may be exercised by marching, even along public highways.

On Sunday, March 21, 2 weeks after Bloody Sunday, approximately 3,200 marchers set out for Montgomery, walking 12 miles a day and sleeping in fields. By the time they reached the capital on Thursday, March 25, they were 25,000 strong.

As Dr. King said standing in front of the capital that day:

Selma, Alabama became a shining moment in the conscience of man. If the worst in American life lurked in its dark streets, the best of American instincts arose passionately from across the nation to overcome it.

Less than 5 months after the last of the three marches, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965—landmark legislation that fundamentally transformed voting rights in the United States, particularly in the Jim Crow South.

As Americans, we all owe a debt of gratitude to those who marched, those who bled, and in some cases those who died, to transform the Voting Rights Act from a bill into a reality.

This past weekend a group of Republican and Democratic lawmakers traveled to Selma, AL, to join President Obama and former President Bush in honoring those brave Americans who worked tirelessly and at great personal cost to secure equal rights for all citizens regardless of their race. As our Nation thinks about their tremendous patriotism and sacrifice this month, it is a particularly appropriate time to talk about the role Congress can play in safeguarding the hard-won rights of minority voters by working to restore the integrity of the Voting Rights Act.

The oath of office that each of us takes when we become a Senator is to "support and defend the Constitution"—and that means supporting and defending voting rights, which are explicitly enumerated in our U.S. Constitution.

In her dissent in 2013, the Shelby County case, Justice Ginsberg highlighted the legislature's heightened responsibility where the protection of citizens' access to polls is a concern, writing that when it is confronting "the most constitutionally invidious form of discrimination, and the most fundamental right in our democratic system, Congress's power to act is at its height."

Well, over the past 50 years Congress has indeed acted. We have worked on a bipartisan basis to ensure that our citizens do not face discrimination at the polls.

In 1965, in response to a slew of violent attacks against civil rights activists, culminating in the attack on peaceful marchers crossing the Edmund Pettus Bridge, we passed the Voting Rights Act, a bill that aimed to "remedy 95 years of pervasive discrimination in voting rights, which [had] resulted in the almost complete disenfranchisement of minorities in certain areas of the country." That act has been rightfully cited as a "crown jewel" of America's civil rights laws, and for the past 50 years it has expanded minority participation in elections by removing first-generation barriers to ballot access, such as literacy tests and poll taxes. Moreover, the law also helped to tackle so-called second-generation barriers to voting, such as voter ID requirements, elimination or curtailment of early voting, voter registration restrictions, and residency restrictions.

Since the act was passed in 1965, Congress has again and again reaffirmed its commitment to equality in Federal elections by reauthorizing the law in 1970, 1975, 1982, and most recently in 2006 when we voted to extend it for another 25 years. That 2006 vote was not a close one. The bill enjoyed what the press described as "overwhelming bipartisan backing," passing the House by a vote of 390 to 33 and by a Senate vote of 98 to 0. That is pretty persuasive bipartisan backing for taking on the most invidious form of discrimination—discrimination in the right to vote. That vote represented a strong affirmation that equality is not a partisan issue. We can and we have worked together to ensure that all Americans are able to participate in our democracy by exercising their right to vote.

Unfortunately, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down key provisions of the Voting Rights Act 2 years ago in 2013. So now it is once again Congress's duty—our duty—to work together to reform the Voting Rights Act. To anyone who doubts the continued need for a robust Voting Rights Act, I submit the following:

In 2006, while sections 4 and 5 were still in effect, the House Judiciary Committee found that the Voting Rights Act was still a critical tool for countering discrimination. The committee observed that "discrimination today is more subtle than the visible methods used in 1965. However, the ef-

fect and results are the same, namely a diminishing of the minority community's ability to fully participate in the electoral process and to elect their preferred candidates of choice."

That report further found that "despite the substantial progress that has been made" since the Voting Rights Act was first passed in 1965, "the evidence [of discrimination] before the Committee resemble[d] the evidence before Congress in 1965, and the evidence that was present again in 1970, 1975, 1982 and 1992."

The behavior of various States in the aftermath of the 2013 Shelby County ruling highlighted the critical role that sections 4 and 5 played in protecting minority voters. For example, as the Brennan Center for Justice noted on the same day the Supreme Court issued its decision, Texas officials announced it would implement a draconian photo ID law which had been blocked by section 5 because of its racial impact. Initial estimates suggested that it would impact 600,000 to 800,000 registered voters in Texas who did not have a government-issued photo ID.

Texas was not alone. North Carolina quickly enacted a series of laws that drastically restricted voters' access to the polls by imposing a strict photo ID requirement, significantly reducing early voting and limiting the timeframe for voter registration—so three different measures.

It is particularly telling that North Carolina legislators deliberately waited for the Supreme Court to strike down the preclearance requirements of section 5 to propose the legislation, understanding that laws with such a discriminatory effect would likely not pass muster under the Voting Rights Act.

In North Carolina, more than 300,000 registered voters lacked a DMV-issued ID. Of those, one-third were African American.

In 2008, the vast majority of African Americans—70 percent—who voted in North Carolina voted during the early voting period. So North Carolina's significant reduction in early voting was cynically calculated to reduce the turnout of African Americans at the polls.

These States are not alone. The Brennan Center for Justice found that in the aftermath of the Shelby County case, "at least 10 of the 15 states that had been covered in whole or in part by section 5 introduced new restrictive legislation that would make it harder for minority voters to cast a ballot."

Simply put, these States' behavior shows that access to our fundamental right—the right of every citizen to be heard through elections—is suffering in the wake of the Shelby County decision.

We cannot let our civil rights laws return to once again being, as Dr. King said before the passage of the Voting Rights Act, mere "dignity without strength." We owe it to those who sacrificed before us, who sacrificed to

form a more perfect Union, to work together on a bipartisan basis to restore the Voting Rights Act.

I stand ready to work with any of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in this esteemed body to make that happen. I hope every Senator feels the same and understands that access to the polls—the right to vote—is the throbbing heart of a democracy, and without that the democracy is deeply damaged.

Fifty years ago this month, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., said at the foot of the Montgomery capitol: "The battle is in our hands." Today, in Congress, in the U.S. Senate, the battle is in our hands. It is our responsibility to debate and pass such legislation to protect and defend the right to vote for every American.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING BILLY CASPER

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to a hall of fame golfer, a remarkable husband, and a loyal friend—Billy Casper. Last month, Billy passed away peacefully at the age of 83. I know I speak for all who knew him when I say he will be sorely missed.

Billy Casper was a champion both in golf and in life. Between 1956 and 1975, he won 51 tournaments on the PGA tour, including the U.S. Open in 1959 and again in 1966. In 1970, he defeated Gene Littler to capture the Masters in what was the tournament's last 18-hole playoff. During his long and illustrious career, he claimed many titles, including five Vardon Trophies for the low-scoring average that year. He was also a member of eight U.S. Ryder Cup teams and still holds the record for the most Ryder Cup points earned by a U.S. team member. He was inducted into the World Golf Hall of Fame in 1978.

Later in his career, Billy captured nine senior PGA tour wins between 1982 and 1989. I am proud that one of these victories came in Jeremy Ranch, UT—the State Billy adopted as his home.

Billy first came to Utah in 1959 to play in the Utah Open. During that week, he and his wife Shirley fell in love with Utah and eventually relocated permanently. He was an active member of the Utah golfing community and was inducted into the Utah Sports Hall of Fame in 2013.

Since his passing, several professional golfers have offered tributes in honor of Billy's memory. Jack Nicklaus, widely considered the greatest golfer of all time, said the following about Billy: